

GRAD SCHOOL, PART 1

**The
Gathering
place**
Interfaith Ministries

WHAT DOES THE GATHERING PLACE OFFER YOU?

Gathering Place programs offer you the opportunity:

- To make a profound difference
- To express the gratitude in your heart
- To care for your brothers and sisters in Christ and to serve your church
- To make friends with people you might not otherwise have met
- To use your talents and skills to help others
- To develop new talents and skills
- To spare caregivers exhaustion



THE POSITIVE EXCITEMENT AT OUR GATHERINGS AND THE JOY SEEN IN OUR PARTICIPANTS IS SO REWARDING. OUR CAREGIVERS TELL US HOW APPRECIATIVE THEY ARE FOR THE FEW HOURS OF FREEDOM AND REST OFFERED THEM EACH WEEK. I CANNOT EXPLAIN HOW THEIR ENTHUSIASM BECOMES SO CONTAGIOUS AND INSTILLS A LOVING DEVOTION TO THOSE I'VE NEVER KNOWN BEFORE BUT GROW TO LOVE. I WANT DESPERATELY TO HELP MAKE THEIR LIVES MORE NORMAL. THE GATHERING PLACE DOES THAT. IT IS MY PASSION.

PEGGY KRAMPOTA, ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIR
TEAM LEADER, FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ALVIN
GP VOLUNTEER AT LARGE FOR 10 YEARS
COMPU.TALK TEACHER

WHY VOLUNTEER WITH US?

- The Gathering Place was created and thrives in Brazoria County.
- For 18 years, it has been led by a group of passionate volunteers like you.
- Our “executives” take no pay and there are not executive perks.
- Almost 100% of our funding goes to direct patient care, caregiver support, or community education.
- Volunteers have a voice through the Advisory Council.
- Free RSVP liability, life, and out-of-pocket health insurance while you are working.



WHY GRAD SCHOOL?

- To find out about more service opportunities within Gathering Place ministries.
- To refresh your skills and to unlearn bad habits that may have developed.
- To learn newest discoveries about prevention, detection, and treatment of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
- To recall emergency and safety procedures.
- To protect yourself and your congregation from liability.

GATHERING PLACE GOALS:

- One: Gatherings allow caregivers a time to rest and to take a break from their caregiving obligations.
- Two: Gatherings provide stimulating activities to improve the quality of participants' lives which may delay progression of AD.
- Three: GPIM helps churches build outreach ministries to families affected by dementia in their congregations and communities.
- Four: GPIM provides education to caregivers and the community about dementia.

TO SUPPORT MINISTRIES, WE:

- Reimburse ministries for food and activity materials.
- Provide mandatory orientation and on-going training.
- Support each ministry with Volunteers at Large.
- Provide funding, coordination, marketing, administration, and compliance support.

OUR EDUCATION & OUTREACH PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

1. Brain Camp
2. BCAAP
3. Support Group
4. Speaker's Bureau
5. Meta Camp
6. CompU.Talk Zoom School
7. Campfire
8. Culture Camp
9. Brain Camp+
10. Health Fairs
11. Brain Fair

BRAZORIA COUNTY ALZHEIMER'S PROJECT: AN EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH OF THE GATHERING PLACE

We sponsor activities which create awareness about dementia and encourage early detection.

Now in its 13th year, BCAAP activities include conferences, caregiver resource fairs, and seminars. Physician presenters at our biannual conferences have included some of the best-known Alzheimer's experts in the US.

Our annual November Memory Screenings are one of the largest community-based screenings in the United States.

BRAIN CAMP TEACHES A LIFESTYLE THAT MAY DELAY OR PREVENT SYMPTOMS OF AD.

Using science that evolved from the Nun's Study, we know the brain has "plasticity." New neurons and neural pathways develop over the lifespan. When people have developed MORE neurons than average with a lifestyle that promotes optimum brain health, they have more cognitive reserve.

- Enhanced reserve serves as a firewall to Alzheimer's diseases. In 2011, the Gathering Place developed the 8-hour course offered over 4 weeks that teaches the lifestyle that promotes cognitive reserve by lowering risk factors for AD. Version 6 rolled out in October 2022.

META CAMP—A SENIOR WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

One in three adult Americans have Metabolic Syndrome. It is a collection of risk factors for cardiac disease and dementia (belly fat, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, high triglycerides and high blood sugar).

The Gathering Place has a 4-hour course to help seniors lose weight in order to control or reverse Metabolic Syndrome.

We have had participants stop using insulin, get off meds, lower their A1C, and lose substantial weight. The program works!

COMPU.TALK: “ZOOM SCHOOL”

In response to COVID-19, the Gathering Place began offering Zoom classes to people with memory disorders. Goals of the program are to slow cognitive decline and improve short term memory and mood in a format that is stimulating and fun for the student. Seven of our 10 students have improved cognitive skills in two years; two have maintained; and only one has not improved.

We offer 2 hours of programming each week consisting of memory retrieval, physical exercise, reminiscing therapy, and bingo.

Ten Gathering Place volunteers serve as teachers and crew.

CAMPFIRE

The scope of CompU.Talk was expanded in February 2023 to include Parkinson's patients with "Campfire," a new weekly Zoom program for men.

Reminiscing Therapy, found efficacious by numerous clinical trials, is used for socialization, to practice memory recall, and to prevent or delay Parkinson's dementia.

Initially a trial program, it was so well received by the participants that it is now a fixture in our line up.

CULTURE CAMP

Started in January 2024, Culture Camp is a collaborative effort among Brazosport Center for the Arts and Sciences, Lake Jackson Historical Museum, and Gathering Place Interfaith Ministries that benefits Brazoria County residents affected by an Alzheimer's Disease diagnosis or other dementia.

Culture Camp is designed to counter the social isolation many people experience after a dementia diagnosis.

BCFAS and LJHM hold one-hour events for caregivers and their loved ones once a quarter.

The program is free and open to our participants and their caregivers.

BRAIN CAMP+

As part of her continuing research on Alzheimer's, our founder, Brenda Maust, discovered that African Americans between the ages of 65 and 74 are 314% more likely to have Alzheimer's than whites. We have not been successful in reaching the African American population with our program, so we decided that now is the time to act!

Brenda updated and combined Brain Camp and Meta Camp into Brain Camp+. Teaching African American citizens that AD is largely preventable, that onset can be delayed, and that, once diagnosed, progression of symptoms may be significantly slowed, is an innovative boots-on-the-ground approach that will mean giant steps in the promotion of health equity in Brazoria County.

Brenda recruited Yogi Walker (counselor, personal trainer, and educator from Angleton) to be the Brain Camp+ coach. She also enlisted Greater Mount Zion Church in Brazoria to host the classes.

We received a Lowrey Grant to fund the program and the first sessions were conducted in June 2024. Feedback from participants has been very positive.

NO. 1 VOLUNTEER WELLNESS PROGRAM FOR SENIORS IN TEXAS

In 2015, a year before we had an office and a phone listing, the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Aging and Disability said we “blew the judges away” with our programs.

GATHERING PLACE PROCEDURES, FORMS, PROTOCOLS, ETC.

- HIPAA—Volunteers and visitors
- Volunteer Commitment
- Sign-in Sheets
- Participants' Nametags and Day Passes
- Accident/Incident Protocol and Report
- Reimbursement Requests
- Memorandum of Understanding

HIPAA (HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT)

- Laws affect how and when volunteers may discuss participants' 'protected health information.' We may not, under any circumstance, discuss their health information outside a Gathering Place event.
- We frequently-and legally-discuss condition changes at planning meetings or among Team Leaders so that we can give better care or be more watchful.
- Volunteer Commitment-The Volunteer Commitment governs behavior at Gatherings. Some requirements are common sense; others protect volunteers from accusations of elder abuse.

VISITOR HIPAA FORM

- Visitors, including new family caregivers and visitors who are considering becoming volunteers, must read and sign the form.
- The Gathering Place has a professional caregiver/client responsibility to safeguard our participants' privacy under the HIPAA laws.
- Protect yourself and your church by complying with the law.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT: HIGHLIGHTS

Outlines what you are encouraged to do:

1. Be friendly and supportive to family members.
2. Be mindful that 60% of Alzheimer's patients will attempt to wander.
3. Report condition changes to the Team Leader.

Explains what you are not permitted to do:

1. Give medical advice to families.
2. Accept gifts from a person who had a dementia diagnosis.
3. Enter a toilet stall to assist a person without having another volunteer with you.
4. Dispense medication.
5. Criticize a participant.

SIGN-IN SHEETS FOR VOLUNTEERS AND PARTICIPANTS

- Volunteers must sign-in, indicating hours they worked that week or month. Include shopping, planning meetings, and food preparation. This information is provided to RSVP on the 5th of the month for the previous month. If you do not sign-in, you will lose insurance that is free to you, but costs RSVP \$450 per year per person.
- Caregivers must sign-in their family member and leave a phone number where they may be reached that day. Sign-in sheets should not be removed before the end of the Gathering so these numbers will be available if needed.
- As a condition of our grant for food, we must provide participant data to the Community Development Block Grant staff immediately after your Gathering. CDBG food reimbursement by the County are held up until sign-in sheets are turned in to them.

MANDATORY NAMETAGS AND DAY PASSES

- When a new participant's enrollment paperwork, including a letter from their doctor with a diagnosis, is sent to our office, a Gathering Place lanyard with nametag is issued to the participant. A card inside of the nametag has the participant's medical and emergency information. The card is accessed by Gathering Place volunteers only in emergencies.
- It is the family's responsibility to keep up with the nametag, keep medical/emergency information current, and have the participant wear it to each Gathering. The nametag serves to let volunteers know that the participant is enrolled in the Gathering Place program.
- If a participant comes to a Gathering without his nametag, a family member is required to fill out a Day Pass, which is forwarded to the GP office at the end of every Gathering. This procedure keeps us in compliance with HIPAA laws. The absence of a nametag alerts volunteers that the person may not have paperwork filed with us.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT PROTOCOL

- Calm the participant. If you can remove her to a private area safely, do so. If the participant cannot be isolated, have other participants and volunteers move away. It will help keep others calm if they are not in the middle of the situation. Administer first aid.
- Call 911. Stabilize the situation, then call for help immediately.
- Call the caregiver or other emergency contact to tell them what has happened and what you have done.
- A volunteer should accompany or meet the participant at the hospital and stay until a family member arrives.
- Fill out an incident report. If several people witnessed the incident, have them also fill out a report if the injury is serious.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT

- The Accident/Incident Report should always be filled out in case of illness, accident, or an incident. The same form is used for participants and volunteers.
- Copies go to the church office, the Gathering Place office, the Team Leader, the caregiver, and to the healthcare provider—doctor or emergency medical personnel.
- If a participant or volunteer has been sent to the hospital, Eva King or Dale Libby should be notified immediately. If a participant goes to a hospital, a Gathering Place volunteer should stay with them until a family member arrives.

REIMBURSEMENTS FOR ITEMS OTHER THAN FOOD

- Reimbursements for items—tablecloths, decorations, activity materials, etc—comes from Gathering Place funds. For 2024-25, each ministry is budgeted \$30 per Gathering for items other than food.
- Please fill-out a reimbursement request form and specify what items were purchased, for which ministry, and what purpose.
- We must have original receipts—no photocopies. Payment, however, may be by cash, debit or credit card, but not checks. Please send in your reimbursement requests to the Gathering Place within 10 days.
- We cannot reimburse you for taxes. You may get a tax exemption form from our office or your church.

REIMBURSEMENTS FOR FOOD

- Brazoria County reimburses for food at Gatherings. To be reimbursed, a volunteer must file a W9 with the county to be set up as a vendor.
- Volunteers must submit original receipts—no photocopies—which were paid for by cash or a debit card. We discourage use of checks or credit cards because federal regulations require paid statements to be submitted in order to be reimbursed.
- Receipts should be submitted within 7 days to the Gathering Place, P.O. Box 2050, Angleton, TX 77516, or bring them to the office at 200 E. Mulberry, Angleton.
- Please do not have personal purchases on the same receipt. It's easy to tell the check-out clerk that you have two transactions.
- CDBG does not pay for food at Gathering Place volunteer meetings, educational activities, or support groups (except in Alvin because we are also providing day care.)



**OK, NO MORE
PAPERWORK...**

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM GPIM?

- Picking up her husband after his first Gathering Place visit, Mary Bates Sechrest, with tears streaming down her face, said “Thank you for giving me back my life.” Jim King, who took care of his wife Chris for 10 years: “I would not have been able to keep her at home without the Gathering Place.”
- Besides training, funding, organizing, marketing, grant compliance, etc, etc, perhaps the most important thing we offer our volunteers is opportunity...a chance to make a profound difference; a way to express gratitude in your heart; a way to serve God and your church.
- Gathering Place volunteers have made a real difference in the quality of life for most of the 400+ dementia patients we’ve cared for and their caregivers.
- That knowledge is what sustains us when we lose them.

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE MOU

- The pastor is the “Boss.”
- These items are agreed upon:

“Gatherings” meet for 4 hours once each month except on holidays, serve lunch, and adhere to a prescribed agenda that has proven to be therapeutic in clinical trials and studies.

Congregations are responsible for the core group of volunteers with support from Volunteers at Large.

One or two people from each ministry will attend quarterly Advisory Council meetings and communicate between GP administration and congregational volunteers.

Volunteers must complete a 3-hour training session every two years.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM YOUR MINISTRY?

- To submit sign-in sheets from volunteers and participants promptly.
- To turn in original receipts promptly.
- To participate in the Advisory Council.
- To set up a communication network among your volunteers, preferably by email, and stay in touch with GP management.
- To submit your tentative agenda in advance to the Coordinator.
- To establish planning sessions that work for YOUR ministry.
- To be aware of responsibilities of congregations, volunteers, and the Gathering Place administration outlined in our Memorandum of Understanding.
- To let us know if you are having problems—we are here to support you.

WHAT DOES THE GATHERING PLACE EXPECT OF YOU? TO BE PART OF A TEAM.

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- Always let your leader know if you cannot be present.
- To sign-in and indicate the number of hours you have worked that month.
- If you are responsible for purchasing, to comply with rules so you'll be reimbursed promptly!
- To attend on-going training, and to continue learning about dementia.
- To follow HIPAA laws and regulations. Do NOT discuss our participants with anyone other than a volunteer, ever. It is against the law, and penalties can be severe.
- To be positive, to respect your fellow volunteers, to keep smiling, and to have fun!

GRAD SCHOOL PART 1 QUIZ

[Grad School Part A Quiz](#)

THANK YOU

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